



## STAGES OF FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PIANO PERFORMANCE SCHOOLS

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**Annotation:** This article analyzes the formation and development stages of piano performance schools from a historical, theoretical and practical perspective. The first piano performance traditions that emerged in European musical culture, their gradual improvement and the specific features of various national performance schools are highlighted. Also, the directions of today's integrative development of piano performance schools and their significance in music education are revealed.

**Keywords:** piano performance, performance schools, music education, interpretation, technique, performance style, musical thinking, pedagogical approach, piano history.

### Introduction.

The formation and development of piano performance schools is one of the most important areas of the development of musical art, which is inextricably linked with the historical evolution of performance culture, pedagogical experience and aesthetic views. The piano, with its deep penetration into European musical life in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, brought about fundamental changes not only in compositional creativity, but also in performance techniques, stage culture, and teaching methods. Thus, the development of piano art, along with the personal skill of the performer, brought into scientific circulation the concept of a "school of performance," formed under the influence of a certain region, cultural environment, and pedagogical traditions.

The term "performance school" in a broad sense refers to a performance tradition formed in a specific historical period, based on a system of clear aesthetic principles, technical approaches, interpretation criteria and pedagogical methods. In this case, the school is not limited to "technique" or "style", but includes many aspects such as a sense of melody, sound culture, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, attitude to timbre, reading musical text and building artistic interpretation. In particular, in piano performance, sound acquisition, hand apparatus and body ergonomics, pedal technique, polyphonic hearing and artistic thinking are considered to be integrated with each other and are considered as methodological "pillars" of the school. Therefore, studying the stages of historical formation of performance schools serves as a theoretical and methodological basis for improving today's piano pedagogy.

From a historical point of view, piano performance schools first emerged on the basis of the traditions of harpsichord and clavichord performance, but later, under the influence of classicism, romanticism and modern trends of the 20th century, they were enriched with various aesthetic and technical concepts. For example, in the classical period (the era of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven), piano performance developed based on the principles of clear rhythmic discipline, transparency of texture, clear articulation and formal balance. In the romantic period (Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, Brahms and others), "cantileness" (a sound close to singing), a wide dynamic palette, rubato, individual interpretation and virtuosity methods

became more pronounced in piano performance. By the 20th century (Debussy, Ravel, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and others), the timbre possibilities of the piano, experiments with texture, the complexity of rhythm and new technical approaches further expanded the scope of performance schools.

At the same time, the pedagogical personality and the traditions of the teacher-student relationship play a special role in the formation of piano performance schools. Because each major performance school (for example, the Viennese Classical School, the French Impressionist School, the Russian Piano School, etc.) has created its own methodological school system, formed pedagogical repertoire selection, a system of technical exercises, and standards of artistic interpretation. It is this historical experience that provides methodological guidance for the effective teaching of general piano science in today's children's music and art schools, and for the gradual development of musical thinking and performance competencies in students. The process of the formation of piano performance schools should be considered as a synthesis of historical-cultural, technical, and pedagogical factors. Because in each era, the art of piano has been inextricably linked not only with the improvement of the capabilities of the instrument, but also with the development of aesthetic views, performance interpretations, and the education system. In this regard, analyzing the evolution of piano performance schools means identifying the development of musical thinking, changes in the artistic position of the performer, and the transformation of pedagogical methodology.

The first stage - the clavier tradition and the Baroque period - created the basis of piano performance based on polyphonic thinking. During this period, the main criteria for performance were fidelity to the text, accuracy of articulation, and the stylistic performance of ornaments. Since polyphonic thinking was paramount, the performer was required to master the competence of hearing and distinguishing several sounds at the same time. This feature has not lost its relevance in today's general piano education, especially in the formation of auditory differentiation in students. During the period of classicism, piano performance was perfected based on the principles of structural clarity, formal logic, and dramatic development. The Viennese classical school put forward the principles of discipline in performance, the gradual construction of dynamics, and the logical unfolding of thematic material. At this stage, technique was considered a means, and content was a goal. Thus, in the development of piano schools, the ratio between technique and artistry became more and more balanced. This principle serves as a methodological basis for teaching general piano lessons in children's music schools: it teaches the student to first explain the form, and then express it through technical means.

By the time of Romanticism, piano performance schools were enriched with elements of individual interpretation, emotional expression, and virtuosity. At this stage, sound quality, cantilena, pedal culture, and stage presence gained priority. The performer's personal interpretation came to the fore. At the same time, pedagogical systems also became more complex: special etudes, technical exercises, and methods aimed at developing finger independence appeared. However, the romantic virtuosity model is not entirely suitable for general piano education, since this subject is aimed at developing universal musical literacy. Therefore, selective use of the experience of the romantic school — that is, acquiring sound culture and expressiveness, but limiting excessive virtuosity — is considered the methodologically correct way out.



At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, the Russian piano school and the French school brought piano performance to a new level. The Russian school put forward a synthesis of deep drama, powerful sound and artistic thinking, while the French school emphasized timbre subtlety, pedal variety and transparency of texture. A comparative analysis of these two directions shows that piano schools were formed in close connection with the national mentality and aesthetic worldview. Thus, the performance school is not only a technical system, but also a cultural phenomenon.

Modernism of the 20th century brought rhythmic complexity, textural experiments and new sonorous possibilities to piano performance. At this stage, the performer began to be considered not only as an interpreter of music, but also as a person capable of intellectually comprehending complex structures. As a result, pedagogical methodology was also directed towards an analytical approach, deep work on metrorhythm and the development of coordination.

The musical heritage of the Uzbek people has an incredibly rich and ancient history. Its unique traditions still retain their artistic and aesthetic value today. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any direction in musical art that would not be inspired by the melodies and songs of the folk musical heritage. National musical thinking served as an important source in the formation of professional composers' creativity. The melodic, rhythmic and melodic features of folk melodies are reflected in modern musical works in a new interpretation.

In order to raise the types of piano performance to a high level in line with the requirements of the time and serve it with dedication, it is necessary, first of all, to study its history in depth. It is also important to respect the traditions of the classical school of performance, honor the legacy of great composers, and follow the laws and regulations of performance.

Among musical instruments, the piano is an extremely convenient and versatile instrument. As the famous pedagogue G. G. Neuhaus noted: "It should be well understood that studying music and musical literacy is a universal cultural activity. The piano is the best, unparalleled tool in this. Music is just as important as studying language, social sciences, mathematics, history, natural science, etc. for a cultured person. If it were up to me, I would introduce compulsory music education through the piano in high school."

This opinion shows that the piano is not only a performance instrument, but also an effective pedagogical tool in general aesthetic and cultural education. With the help of the piano, there is an opportunity to form musical literacy, auditory culture, polyphonic thinking, and artistic perception.

The educational and upbringing process in a higher educational institution should be focused on training specialists who can meet the requirements of the time and work successfully immediately after starting practical activities. Today, the educational process in higher education institutions has become much more complex in terms of content and intensity. Therefore, one of the important conditions is to deeply study the goals and objectives of specialist training, the characteristics of professional training, and to determine the content, principles and methods of teaching and educating students on a scientific basis. In particular, in the field of piano performance and pedagogy, the combination of historical experience, classical school traditions and modern methodological approaches is an urgent issue.



Any musician, teacher and performer should have a deep knowledge of the history, origin and specific features of their profession and their favorite instrument. After all, understanding the history of the instrument creates the basis for a correct understanding of its artistic and technical capabilities. That is why, at the beginning of our research work, we set out to study the history of the piano and gain a deeper understanding of its significance. The piano instrument has a historical development process of about 500 years, and according to some sources, even longer. During this period, it went through various stages, improving in terms of construction and performance capabilities.

The formation of the piano cannot be separated from the history of ancient stringed instruments. In ancient Rome and Greece, during the time of Plato, there was a musical instrument called the monochord. The term "monochord" comes from the Greek words monos - "one" and chorde (or chord) - "string". This instrument has one string and was used mainly for measuring pitch and studying music theory. During the evolution of stringed instruments, instruments such as the clavichord and harpsichord appeared, which later became the basis for the creation of the piano. Thus, the piano is a perfect instrument formed as a product of a long historical development.

In the process of development from century to century, several strings were gradually added to the initially single-stringed instruments. These strings were played by plucking with the fingers or using a mediator (mizrab). Over time, the construction and performance methods of stringed instruments improved.

By the end of the 17th century, the lower keys of some instruments began to be made of ebony. By the 18th century, the colors of the keyboards had acquired a look close to modern pianos. If we look at the history of the emergence of the clavichord, we will see that the genesis of the first piano is reflected in it. That is, the clavichord is considered the direct ancestor of the piano. Some researchers consider the clavichord to be an improved type of the ancient harp instrument in the form of a closed box. Unlike the harp, the clavichord body had a closed resonance box. Scientific research has shown that some structural elements of stringed instruments spread from Eastern countries to Europe and Asia via the Great Silk Road. As a result, the interaction between Eastern and Western musical cultures also laid the foundation for the formation of keyboard instruments to a certain extent.

Some studies by European scholars note that some structural elements of stringed and box-shaped keyboard instruments came to Europe from Eastern countries. In particular, there were factors that influenced the formation of musical instruments during the process of cultural exchange along the Great Silk Road. Therefore, the interaction of Eastern and Western musical traditions in the genesis of the piano cannot be denied. Some sources claim that some of the stringed and box-shaped keyboard instruments existing in the East had similar structural features to the piano. However, the piano is considered a perfect instrument created as a result of the evolution of keyboard string instruments that were formed directly in Europe, in particular in Italy.

Starting from the 15th century, instruments with a monochord structure with keys began to improve. Certain differences in technical capabilities emerged between the clavichord and the harpsichord. The clavichord had a gentle, delicate sound, allowing the performer to make certain dynamic changes. The harpsichord has a triangular (horizontal) body, the strings are plucked with a mediator (plectrum) and produce a resonant, higher sound. The main difference



between the clavichord and the harpsichord is that the strings of the harpsichord are arranged in different lengths (as in the later piano), and each string is tuned to a specific range of sounds. According to historical sources, the first harpsichords date back to the beginning of the 16th century (around 1500), some of which are now kept in European museums, including the Vienna Museum.

Keyboard instruments developed mainly in two structural directions:  
horizontal (later closer to the shape of a grand piano);  
vertical (later closer to the shape of a piano).

Keyboard instruments became widespread at the end of the 18th century, especially during the French bourgeois revolution that began in 1789. However, it would not be correct to call this period the "piano era". It is more appropriate to call this stage in a general sense the "piano era", since during this period the clavichord, harpsichord and early piano models existed side by side.

The formation and development of piano performance schools is a complex historical process that is inextricably linked with the evolution of musical thought, the improvement of the design of the instrument, and the enrichment of pedagogical systems. The polyphonic thinking and articulation precision of the Baroque era, the formal balance and structural logic of classicism, the emotional depth and cantilena of romanticism, the sound culture and timbre interpretation of the Russian and French schools, the rhythmic and textural complexity of 20th-century modernism - all this turned piano performance into a multi-layered aesthetic and pedagogical system. The following patterns are observed in the evolution of piano performance schools: firstly, technical perfection gradually integrated with artistic interpretation; secondly, national schools brought their own aesthetic color to the development of general musical thought; thirdly, individual methodology based on the tradition of teacher-student gradually turned into a scientifically based systematic pedagogical model.

Generalization of the experience of piano performance schools serves as an important theoretical and methodological basis for improving the methodology of teaching general piano subjects in children's music and art schools. Because by preserving the most effective aspects of historical schools based on an integrative and differential approach, it is possible to comprehensively develop musical hearing, performance technique, artistic thinking and interpretive competencies in students. Therefore, an in-depth study of the development of piano performance schools is not only of historical and aesthetic importance, but also an important condition for creating an effective methodological model in the modern music education system.

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